

Life of the Spirit

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Editorial

The Church of this century has succeeded magnificently in the task of bringing new life to every part of her being; that the process still continues need not prevent our recognizing the magnitude of what has already been achieved. In thinking about it we are naturally inclined to emphasize its more obvious manifestations, the liturgical movement, the revival of scripture studies, the new sense of responsibility among lay people. Behind all these lies something more important: a renewed theological exploration of the living reality which revelation presents to our faith, the risen Christ in whom we live through the Spirit.

The phrase 'biblical theology', so often used in this connection, at once indicates a certain tension. Ultimately it is the tension in all human knowledge between the reality grasped and the conceptual reasoning by which it is grasped, a tension we try to loosen by falsely emphasizing the importance of the one or the other. For most Catholics in the recent past the emphasis lay with the abstractions, with a text-book terminology separated from the scriptural presentation of the living Christ. Now that all this is changing, men begin to make the opposite mistake, trying to set aside the results of the Church's long struggle with words and meanings, sealed, it must be remembered, by the special presence of the Spirit. It is true that theology can turn into a mere academic game, as for that matter can scripture studies, when torn from faith-given contact with the divine reality, but on the other hand those who try to by-pass the theological expression of the Church's 'holy teaching' are in danger of setting forth another gospel from the one they have received. Novelties in theology are not the evidence of life they are often taken to be; more important though less obvious is the renewed growth of every existing part, such as we are now witnessing.

In recent years there have been plenty of novelties in theological writing to catch the eye. Yet when the time comes for a true assessment of the 'books of the century', it is something of a different kind that will be remembered. F. X. Durrwell's great work, *The Resurrection*, recently translated most successfully into English, is the subject of the first article in this month's LIFE OF THE SPIRIT, where it is discussed against the background of that biblical theology it exemplifies. To meet it for the first time is to experience a profound re-orientation of thought; we recommend it most strongly to every reader of this journal.

Faith and Reality

Two Major Works of Biblical Theology

CORNELIUS ERNST O.P.

It is generally admitted that the Catholic Church is distinguished by an insistence on the reality of the objects of her faith. For those who are in one way or another alienated from the Church this realism often appears unenlightened and superstitious, a kind of primitive surrender to the principalities and powers of a magical world which lies behind and yet permeates the world of everyday, and heightens its common-sense obviousness by charging it with a *mana* derived from supposed agencies like, but more powerful than, the agencies and objects of the tangible world. Within the Church this sense of the reality of the object of faith has become incorporated in devotions of many kinds, and also in a metaphysical theology. It would be interesting to examine in some detail the various forms taken by this incorporation of a living and sensitive faith, stretching out to touch and handle its objects; but here we shall simply note some of the dangers which must be guarded against in these human incorporations of living faith, the danger common to all of course being that faith ceases to live in them and that the reality which it once sought to grasp through them ceases to be a reality precisely of faith and becomes a reality like that of the everyday world and only differing from it by a difference of sign, as it were - a 'super-natural' reality, something rather dismaying like the crude picture proposed and rejected by opponents of the Church.

Thus one may not unreasonably wonder what part faith still continues to play in, for example, a well-established and highly sanctioned devotion like the Stations of the Cross, apart from merely providing a setting which allows those who take part in the devotion to 'change sign', to step almost without noticing it from a profane to a ritual world. Who is this sorrowful figure with whom the participants are expected to identify themselves in sympathy? Undoubtedly the urgent impulse of faith to possess the reality of its object was once certainly there and may often be there still; but it is not clear, to the present writer at least, that the historical particularization which has provided the human form in which faith might present to itself the reality of its

object, has not now become dissociated from the Jesus Christ of faith and revelation and acquired merely the twilight reality of myth. What is meant to faith by the three falls, for example? Similar considerations could be offered in regard to the devotion of the Christmas crib—realism again but, one feels, dissociated realism.

It is perhaps only too easy to assent to reflections like these; what is more surprising, and more difficult perhaps to appreciate, is that a remarkably similar position frequently obtains in the practice of dogmatic theology. The essential impulse of the Church's official theology, in its really great and saintly exponents such as St Thomas, is to grasp, as freshly and as powerfully as the human mind can, the reality of the object of faith; and the canonized means of doing so is the deployment, in the act of faith, of an understanding already exercised in the metaphysics of being, with a sense of reality sharpened and made sensitive by that exercise, in such a way that the reality of the object of faith is simultaneously grasped together with the reality of the object of ordinary metaphysical knowledge. The reality of the object of faith is then apprehended as even more real than the object of metaphysical knowledge: there is, that is to say, a *theological* analogy of being which includes and re-orientates the merely metaphysical analogy of being, supplying it with a fresh content and point of comparison, or *primum analogatum*. It should of course be noted here that the metaphysical analogy of being does not depend on purely 'philosophical' experience, but assimilates the whole manifold richness of human experience in its most heightened manifestations.

Supposing, then, that the living impulse of faith towards the grasp of its object grows weak; suppose, too, that the human experience to be organized metaphysically is impoverished and the synthesizing metaphysical power insufficient to its task: the consequence, with which we are all too familiar, follows. A set of concepts the primary use of which has been the field of metaphysical knowledge takes the place of the real object of faith, and what might be called 'supernatural metaphysics', a metaphysics of 'super-natural' realities exhaustively expressed by the metaphysical concepts, takes the place of a genuine theology which is always *open* to the reality made accessible to faith, always painfully conscious of its own inadequacy to the mysterious object revealed to faith. When such a displacement has occurred, faith once again, just as in devitalized devotions, has merely the role of guaranteeing a secondary reality, other than yet essentially like the reality known metaphysically, and stripped of all its intrinsic richness

since the concepts used in the theological system are not felt to leave any remainder for further exploration - any obscurity is thought to be a 'difficulty' not a mystery. I do not think there is a single area of dogmatic theology in which this shift and substitution has not at some time occurred; the 'hypostatic union' for the Lord Jesus, 'transubstantiation' for the eucharist, grace as a quality for life in the Spirit are three examples of it. The temptation today, indeed, is to abandon all this vast treasure of conceptualized insight, even when as is frequently the case, it is sanctioned by the authoritative definitions of the Church and thus a divinely guaranteed vehicle of revelation: it is a temptation vigorously to be resisted. The true point of application of all our spiritual resources must rather be the rediscovery in faith of the realities to which we have access in faith alone, and the energetic exercise of our speculative understanding, thus reanimated, to grasp conceptually, as far as we can and with the help of the traditional theology of the Church, those realities of revelation in a comprehensive unity which embraces the historically changing realities of our human and cosmic existence. It need hardly be said, moreover, that even if the 'average' theology current in the Church is frequently not sustained in the individual believer or theologian by a very vital faith, it is *always* sustained by the indefectible faith of the Church as a whole guaranteed by the presence of the Spirit in her, and consequently remains (almost, as it were, in spite of itself) the bearer of part at least of the realities of revelation.

How, then, are we to set about rediscovering in faith the realities of revelation—the Revelation-reality? (I must be allowed simply to *assume* here what must always and everywhere be the 'transcendental' answer to this question, namely, prayer). One answer to this question, the force of which is being increasingly realized by Catholics, is the study and practice of biblical theology: that is, the rediscovery in faith of the Revelation-reality in and through what is supremely the Revelation-word. Two possible interpretations of this general statement may be examined in the two books, each of them outstanding in its way, to the review of which the foregoing remarks are intended as a somewhat prolonged introduction.

In the first of these books, by the well-known Protestant scholar Oscar Cullmann¹, the Revelation-word is submitted to a close analysis, using all the resources of modern scholarship, in which the numerous titles by which Jesus is known and his reality expressed in the New

¹The Christology of the New Testament. (S.C.M. Press; 42s.)

Testament are explored in orderly succession. This is not the place to comment in detail on Professor Cullmann's interpretations, though I should like specially to commend the chapter on 'The Son of Man'. (I must also note than some of his views, especially in *obiter dicta*, are unacceptable to Catholics, and his usefulness for a reader new to studies of this kind is in consequence less than it might have been.) What is more to the point here is to comment on his method and the nature of the conclusions accessible by the use of such a method.

Fortunately, Professor Cullmann is quite explicit in his introductory chapter about the purpose and methods of his book. Describing the later Christological controversies in the Church, he remarks of them that they are concerned with Christ's *person* and *nature*: the New Testament answer to the question: 'Who is Christ?', on the other hand, is an answer in terms of *function* (p. 4). In a footnote here he disclaims Bultmann's sense of 'function', and declares that for him Christ's 'function' is a real (the German has *ontisches*) Christological event. Thus an examination of the titles by which Christ is spoken of in the New Testament (including of course the title 'Christ') will help us to grasp the sense of his person and redeeming work. Now we may grant that the 'problematic' of the New Testament writings is not quite the same as that of the later centuries, and it is important that we should recognize this; but the essential continuity between the two periods is a concern in faith for the ('ontic') reality of the Christ Event. We may even grant that the later controversies were conducted on too narrow a basis in the Revelation-word, and it is a great merit of Professor Cullmann's book that it helps us to realize how much more of the revelation of Christ we may attempt to grasp theologically and conceptually; but what Professor Cullmann does not appear fully to appreciate is that the later Christological controversies did succeed magnificently in laying down *ontological* definitions of the reality of Christ in such a way that this reality became accessible conceptually to minds for which the reality of the created world too was an object of religious concern. What Professor Cullmann's fine analysis of the Christological titles shows us is that the reality of the Christ Event contains a wealth of intelligible riches diversely brought to manifestation in each of the titles; but one cannot help feeling that there is a tendency for this intelligibility merely to be entertained in the mind, as sustained by human intelligence in a web of scholarship, rather than to be *applied* to the Revelation-reality which is the abiding and unified source of the intelligibility. It is not, of course, that Professor Cullmann is unaware

of the need to return to the living source of intelligibility, but it is possible to envisage a method of practising biblical theology in which there is never any departure from the source at all, where the living Christ is continually present as the object of contemplation.

This is the distinction made by Fr Durrwell at the beginning of what is clearly a lifework, a book which magnificently sums up, more perhaps than any other single writing, that profound change which has slowly been taking place in the Catholic conscience in the last fifty years². Fr Durrwell distinguishes between two possible methods of doctrinal research in Scripture: 'One may try either to analyse what the sacred writer is thinking, or to grasp the Christian reality underlying the inspired text' (p. xxiv). As he points out: 'A study that goes beyond the actual words of the Apostles in an effort to grasp the Christian reality itself presupposes a faith in that reality' (*ibid.*); Fr Durrwell's book is the record of a living faith continually in contact with the Revelation-reality of the risen Christ through the Revelation-word of the Bible.

The two complementary truths which according to Fr Durrwell emerge from studying the resurrection of Christ in this way are: 'the fact that the death and resurrection remain for ever actual in Christ in glory, and the identification of the Church with Christ in glory, not merely in one body with him, but actually in the act of his death and glorification' (p. xxi). This compact statement indicates very clearly how Fr Durrwell sees the work of his kind of biblical theology. For it is manifest that these truths are formulated in language which is not the language of the New Testament, nor is simply analytically descriptive of that language: that they are offered as an explicit statement, in Fr Durrwell's own terms, of convictions underlying the New Testament writings and implicit in them: 'act', 'actual', 'identification' are not biblical terms. And I must say at once that the book as a whole only approximates to these two truths as a sort of mathematical limit: it is a measure of Fr Durrwell's remarkable success that the approximation is so close.

Here we have a fresh problem, then, one very unlike the problem set us by Professor Cullmann's book. Has Fr Durrwell any carefully thought-out and systematized body of language and concepts in which the explanatory, non-biblical concepts he actually uses find their proper place? In fact I do not think he has: his explanatory language would seem to be 'open-textured' in such a way that it acquires its temporary

²F. X. Durrwell: *The Resurrection*. Translated by Rosemary Sheed, with an Introduction by Charles Davis. (Sheed and Ward; 30s.)

specialized significance and force from the use to which it is put in successive contexts in the book. Consequently, while his language has all the pressure of personal experience, it not seldom lacks a precision which a more systematic theology can supply³. This is not merely being urged as a possible criticism: it is meant to indicate the special value of the book, and the need to absorb it into a wider context – a process, this absorption, which will considerably modify the context as well, and to some extent may already have done so. The resurrection is not mentioned even once in what is one of Pius XII's most important encyclicals, *Mystici Corporis* (1943), while the risen Christ has a major role in one of his last pronouncements, the encyclical *Haurietis Aquas* (1956) on the Sacred Heart. Fr Durrwell's book is a challenge to the professional theologian to re-examine his whole conceptual system: to criticize it in the light of a faith excited to fresh contact with the Revelation-reality through the Revelation-word, a fresh contact excited by a creative exegesis which continually explores the reality offered to faith, in a language charged with an implicit ontology.

Let us glance briefly at part of Fr Durrwell's treatment of the theme of 'identification'. He says (pp. 218-9): '(Our Christian life) springs from the Holy Spirit, but it is lived personally by Christ (Gal. 2. 20); the Spirit is its cause . . . Christ is its subject. The life-giving communication of the Spirit and the personal life of Christ, it becomes our own

³Fr Durrwell's attempts in footnotes to come to terms with more conventional theology are unhappy: see n. 40, p. 92; n. 51, p. 134; n. 39 on p. 217. In the first two cases the translation makes him a shade more categorical than his own words ('n'en est sans doute pas' might be 'presumably not' rather than 'certainly not'; 'parfaitement conciliable' might be 'perfectly compatible' rather than 'in perfect harmony with'). In the first case, Fr Durrwell's statement is in formal contradiction with the solemn assertion of *Mystici Corporis* (Denz 2290), and it is in any case quite unnecessary to deny the common action of the three Persons *ad extra* in the divinizing action of grace in order to attribute a proper role in that action to each of the three Persons. In the second case, Fr Durrwell's views might be compatible with *part* of Catholic theology in regard of Christ's knowledge; but no Catholic theologian would wish to assert that Christ's prophetic (or infused) knowledge was incomplete. In the third case, Fr Durrwell has no need to defend himself against that part of the condemnation in *Mediator Dei* to which he refers (it bears on an interesting aberration of major German theologians in the forties); what he does need to bear in mind is the second part of the condemnation, in the same sentence, where the encyclical goes on to reject the view that 'unam ac numero eamdem, ut dicitur, gratiam coniungere Christum cum *Mystici eius Corporis membris*' (AAS 39 (1947), p. 593). The grace we derive from Christ is *personally* our own; and thus only specifically and not numerically the same as his.

life when the Spirit incorporates us into the glorified humanity of our Lord'. I wonder whether there is anyone who will not be shocked to find that Fr Durrwell interprets Gal. 2. 20 ('I live, yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me') by saying that Christ is the *subject* of our Christian life. Such a shock is salutary: it provokes reflection not only on the biblical text itself, but also on the meaning of being a 'subject'. Fr Durrwell goes no further: he employs the ontologically loaded word, but it is a word which for him has no systematic metaphysical context. It is for the theologian to assimilate Fr Durrwell's insight, and correct it, in fact, by taking into account the irrevocable and incommunicable responsibility of our unique created personality and 'subjecthood', which is not lost in our 'identity' with Christ. Do we not also say: 'Come, Lord'?

Fr Durrwell's book is so rich, so powerful, so consistently perceptive, so tender often, that it absorbs the reader's mind with a kind of fascination: one has the feeling of discovering the heart of the Christian mystery for the first time⁴. It becomes all the more necessary to stand back from the book and remind oneself of what it does *not* say. The really major element in the Christian consciousness which does not permit of being taken up satisfactorily into Fr Durrwell's synthesis is in fact this consciousness itself, not only in ourselves but also in Christ. I do not of course wish to deny that this Christian and Christ consciousness has received in the past all too one-sided and limited an emphasis, for instance in the abbreviated 'satisfaction theory' of the redemption about which Fr Davis speaks in his useful introduction, and which was proposed for authoritative sanction at the Vatican Council. And yet, both in Christ and in Christians, the subjectivity of human mind and will are essential to integral Christianity. Secondly it may be as well to point out that other synoptic views of the whole of Christian life, even in exclusively New Testament terms, have been presented from different points of view, such as the passion (as in Schelkle's *Die Passion Jesu*) or *agape* (as in Warnach's *Agape*). None of this is meant to detract from Fr Durrwell's achievement, but it is an attempt to set it in its proper context.

⁴He has been extremely well served by his translator. I should like, however, to register my disagreement with the policy of replacing the transliterated Greek of the original by an English word (e.g. 'spirit' often for *pneuma* - and here Fr Durrwell's use of capital and small letters, 'Esprit' and 'esprit' has often not been followed). It also seems unfortunate that the Douai version has been followed even when Fr Durrwell's version is required by his exegesis. This may be due to censorship regulations: it is still unfortunate.

In this review both Professor Cullmann's and Fr Durrwell's books have been considered from the point of view of their theological form, as it were, rather than their content, which in neither case is profitably to be summarized; I trust that readers of the review could no longer be satisfied with a summary.

Our Lady in Scripture—II: Oral Tradition

BENET WEATHERHEAD o.p.

Before the gospels were written, or rather before the gospel was recorded in writings which achieved stability in the four books we now have, there was an oral tradition. Before even the passion of our Lord, his sayings were circulated by word of mouth, handed on by those who had been present, to those who had not yet heard or seen him, stirring some to enmity, drawing others towards him. The apostles themselves were sent out by our Lord in his own lifetime to proclaim the coming of the kingdom of heaven and to set out the general lines of his teaching, a new teaching distinct from that of the rabbis, calling men to repentance and a greater purity of intention, to an inward purity of the heart deeper than outward purity before the law. They would have reported the actual words he used; perhaps he even gave them schemes to remember the outlines by and made them learn his sayings by heart; even so, Peter would have shaped them slightly differently from Matthew, Matthew from John, and when they were repeated from their audience to others they would have been slightly re-shaped again. This oral tradition certainly preserved the substance of our Lord's teaching accurately, whether it arose from the preaching of our Lord himself on the soil of Palestine or from the preaching missions of the apostles after the resurrection. It was concerned with allegiance to the person of our Lord, the kingdom he was to establish for his Father, the dispositions and conduct of those who were to make up the kingdom, the nucleus of the new Israel. It was a general message to the Jews first, and after their refusal to the Gentiles. This does not mean that there was nobody as yet to reflect more deeply

on the person of our Lord. It is possible that the devout circles into which he was born were already during his lifetime penetrating deeper into the mystery of his birth and the person of his mother. But in the general oral tradition, of which the bulk of the first three gospels is a written arrangement, our Lady is mentioned only incidentally to the main themes. These mentions are the family visit which occasioned a saying of our Lord regarding family ties, and his rejection by the people of his own country—Nazareth, which is the setting of another saying: ‘A prophet is not without honour save in his own country’. These stories were handed on not to tell us something about our Lady, but to lead up to an important saying of our Lord: nevertheless both preserve something about her, which is doubly valuable because it comes from so primitive a layer of the New Testament, and because, if we compare the versions of the first three evangelists, it can lead us into the mystery of our Lady and her life on earth.

‘Who is my mother?’—Matt. 12. 46–50; Mark 3. 31–35; Luke 8. 19–21

One aspect of our Lord’s teaching about the kingdom of heaven was that it demanded a love and loyalty to himself deeper and stronger than the love which exists between members of the same family. It did not of course destroy family ties—we have only to remember his condemnation of those who neglected their parents, his insistence on the commandments—but it might impose a choice on those who wished to be his disciples between following him and remaining in their own homes, it would even on occasion bitterly divide households. The person of our Lord himself would be a stumbling block, but the claims of the kingdom were over-riding; ‘he who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he who loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me’. In this very connection the first Christians repeated an incident and saying of his, in which the claims of the kingdom were vigorously illustrated, since it concerned his own relation to his mother and family. That it was preserved primarily for the sake of the saying we can see from the fact that once that has been recorded we hear no more of the family visit that occasioned it. Each of the first three evangelists has the story, with slight but interesting variations. We can begin by discarding, for our purposes, the version of Luke. He has the saying in an abbreviated form in which it has become assimilated to the context in which it occurs. He has chosen to place the incident after the parable of the sower, and clinches the lesson of the parable by giving the saying in a form in which it echoes the

conclusion of the parable; the good seed represents those 'who *hearing the word* hold it fast', his mother and brothers are 'those who *hear the word* of God and do it'. This is successful as a literary and theological device, but the details of the story have been ironed out and the context tells us nothing about the family.

It is more rewarding to compare the versions and contexts of Matthew and Mark: here is Mark's version:

'And his mother and his brothers came; and standing outside they sent to him and called him. And a crowd was sitting about him; and they said to him, "Your mother and your brothers are outside, asking for you". And he replied, "Who are my mother and my brothers?" And looking around on those who sat about him, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother".'

As regards the words of our Lord, Matthew gives them in a form virtually identical with that of Mark: the exception is that where Mark says: 'the will of God', Matthew has: 'the will of my father who is in heaven'; the phrase has a more semitic ring and is perhaps closer to the actual expression used by our Lord. It is usually said that Matthew, as we have it now, abbreviates Mark, cutting out the vivid details which Mark remembered from the preaching of St Peter, but that is not entirely borne out by this passage; here he has a rather different detail - our Lord does not merely look round the circle of listeners sitting on the ground, he stretches out his hand and points to his disciples. It is possible that we have two eyewitnesses behind the accounts. Nevertheless - and here at last we are coming to the point - at the beginning of the story we seem to have a more primitive tone in Mark than in Matthew. Mark says, 'And his mother and his brothers came; and standing outside they sent to him and called him'. This sounds imperious compared with Matthew's 'stood outside asking to speak to him' and is in keeping with Matthew's general practice of toning down expressions which seem contrary to the dignity and independence of our Lord. And it is confirmed when we look at the wider context of the story.

In Matthew and in Mark it occurs after our Lord's dispute with the Pharisees, the dispute provoked by the Pharisee accusation that our Lord worked his miracles by the power of the devil. It is difficult to understand why it occurs here in Matthew, for one of the main features of that gospel is that it collects together sayings which were originally given on different occasions but which are connected thematically; an

example is the discourse in chapter 10 where Matthew has synthesized our Lord's teaching on discipleship, and included the sayings which emphasize the priority of loyalty to the kingdom of God over family ties, the very theme which is illustrated by his saying here. Why does Matthew not use this story to clinch the discourse as Luke has done with his version of it at the end of the discourse about the seed? It can only be because he found it here in Mark or in some source on which they both depend. But there is a good reason for its appearing here in Mark, for in his gospel, dependent as it is on the preaching of Peter, we find that the dispute with the Pharisees, alarmed by the strange new preaching and the miracles which appear to authenticate it, has been preceded by a general alarm of his friends at his conduct: 'And when his friends heard it, they went out to seize him, for people were saying, "He is beside himself"' (Mark 3. 21). Mark, it seems, is telling us that his family were moved by the general alarm to go and look for him, and when they found him to try to summon him back to a more regular and quiet life. We know from elsewhere (John 7. 2-9) that our Lord maintained some relations with his family during his public ministry, but that they did not at first support and believe in him. What in all this of his mother? Judging from this text alone we would say that she shared in the family's alarm even though we know from other passages that she had also a far deeper knowledge of and insight into her son's messiahship. But on an earlier and similar occasion (Luke 2. 50), our Lady had not understood a saying of our Lord. We must be careful not to assume that our Lady from the beginning comprehended perfectly and exactly what her son was saying and doing; it is not impossible that she too had to grow in understanding and suffered as she did so.

'Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary?' - Matt. 13. 53-58; Mark 6. 1-6; Luke 4. 16-30 (and cp John 6. 42).

A difficulty that faced the first Christians was that the messiah in whom they themselves rejoiced had been rejected by the leaders and the majority of his own people. His teaching and his miracles had failed to convince Israel of his divine mission and had instead aroused an opposition so violent that it led to his death. He himself had experienced the opposition, foreseen its end, and tried to prepare his followers to accept it when it fell on them in their turn. In the conversations with the Jews of Jerusalem which are recorded by John, our Lord had tried again and again to open the eyes of his opponents and force them to

recognize the deeper causes of their hostility. The more general tradition preserved sayings and incidents which illustrated the attitude of the rabbis, incidents which occurred mainly in Galilee and which were early made into a little collection of their own and went to the making up of the Synoptic gospels. An example is the five controversies which follow one another in Mark 2.1-3.6. The motive which led to their being preserved in this form was the desire to illustrate our Lord's practice and to encourage the disciples when they found themselves facing the same hostility. Related to these is the story of our Lord's rejection at Nazareth, the village where he had been brought up and where his family still lived. It is the occasion of a saying which is recorded by all four evangelists, though John alludes to it without repeating the story (John 4. 44) and places it in a context in which he appears to call Judaea the 'country' of our Lord. For the moment we can leave aside the version of Luke. It is much fuller than those of Matthew and Mark; it apparently contains certain internal contradictions which have led scholars to suppose it to be made up of items from two, or even three, different visits to Nazareth, and it is placed by Luke at the beginning of the public ministry, earlier than in the other two gospels. It seems therefore to have been manipulated by Luke for narrative and theological reasons and though it probably enshrines a genuine memory of an eyewitness, the actual words of the Nazarenes have been cut down to a minimum, omitting all reference to our Lady.

When we compare the versions of Matthew and Mark, it seems certain that here Matthew is dependent on Mark. Matthew is shorter, stripped of inessentials; it uses the same words as Mark but they have been re-written, partly for the sake of greater clarity and elegance and partly for another reason which will become apparent. This is the story as told by Mark: 'He went away from there and came to his own country; and his disciples followed him. And on the sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue; and many who heard him were astonished, saying, "Where did this man get all this, and what is the wisdom given to him, and the mighty works that are done at his hands? Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us?" And they took offence at him. And Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house." And he could do no mighty work there, except that he laid his hands upon a few sick people and healed them. And he marvelled at

their unbelief'.

When we set Matthew beside this we see that certain changes have taken place: (a) our Lord is no longer called the carpenter, but the carpenter's son; (b) he works few miracles there because of their lack of faith, but Matthew does not say he was unable to; (c) he is not said to have marvelled at their lack of faith at all. It is evident that in Matthew a reverence for our Lord has led to the toning down of those expressions which laid what seemed to the author-translator too much stress on the humble occupation of our Lord, or tended to diminish the divine power and foreknowledge which were his. The people of Nazareth were amazed that the carpenter — one who had lived among them and worked as a carpenter — should have this wisdom and these miraculous powers; they knew very well that he had not attended the rabbinical schools, he had been busy among them. But to be surprised that a carpenter's son should have this wisdom makes less sense; it was perfectly possible for a carpenter's son to become a rabbi, and there was nothing of itself derogatory in being the son of a carpenter; it was only that they were too familiar with his relatives to be able to credit what they saw and heard. This was certainly so. But that there was a more hidden and less pleasant cause for their disbelief is suggested by the change which Matthew has made in the phrase which follows; 'the son of Mary' becomes 'is not his mother called Mary (Miriam)?' It is possible that Matthew has made this change for a literary reason, since he has just called our Lord 'the son of the carpenter', and thus alluded to Joseph. But in Mark there is no mention of Joseph at all. This is usually explained as being due to the fact that Joseph was already dead. The explanation is not sufficient, for Luke, writing later, reduces the words of the Nazarenes to 'Is not this Joseph's son?' A Jew took his name from his father, and his father's death made no difference. Only if he was illegitimate would he have been described as his mother's son. Thus it looks as if the words of the Nazarenes as given in Mark carry this imputation. We are led back to the mystery of our Lord's birth; for Matthew and Luke, and it can hardly be doubted for Peter and Mark also, it is certain that our Lord was conceived miraculously by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit, but here, in the malicious words of the Nazarenes, we have the other side of the picture and the first instance of a theme dear to anti-Christian polemics. Matthew and Luke give their accounts of our Lord's mysterious conception and have eliminated the malicious imputation from the words of our Lord's fellow-townsmen. But it was there.

In both these stories from an early layer of the New Testament we find our Lady linked to a family, a group who are described as the brothers and sisters of our Lord. The brothers are even named. Who were they? The dispute began centuries ago and can hardly be solved here. It is probable that they were cousins on one or other side of the family. It is more important to notice that they were for some time out of sympathy with our Lord; they were workers living perhaps in Nazareth itself or close by, leading quiet lives and afraid of the disturbance and scandal which the enthusiasm of other Galileans for their cousin's teaching might and indeed was bringing in its wake. They certainly gave protection to our Lady, by now a widow, but it may not have been a particularly sympathetic protection. If, despite their inner family knowledge of the mystery implicit in their cousin's birth, they themselves doubted though without going as far as the more hostile neighbours, it cannot have made our Lady's position any easier. She had been accepted by the family of Joseph, she must have been since she was accepted by Joseph himself; but the revelation in which his doubts were overcome and the truth of the mystery made known to him may not have had so convincing a repercussion in his own family. That it was known to them we cannot doubt; they must themselves have been the source of the information worked up into the infancy narrative of Matthew, told as it is from Joseph's point of view. But the facts of Joseph's marriage may well have been known more generally without the explanation being disclosed, or if disclosed accepted. The facts would have been overlaid by time and familiarity, but remembered again when Mary's son began to attract attention to himself. Thus even in her son's lifetime the person and the role of our Lady were a source of difficulties; on the one hand there were those who knew and accepted the revelation of the divine origin of her son, though even they may have conceived it and his messiahship along conventional and worldly lines, but on the other there were those who added scandal, in our modern sense of the word, to the hostility her son was rousing. It cannot have been easy for her; and when her son separated from her to give himself entirely to the work his Father had set him, himself preaching the claims of the kingdom above family ties, it must have occasioned her a fresh suffering. But in order to understand the place of her motherhood in her son's work, and of her suffering through that motherhood, as well as her own dispositions and insight, we have to turn to other passages of the New Testament.

Scripture Terms—I: ‘Testament’

LEONARD JOHNSTON

The word which we translate as ‘testament’ could equally well be called an alliance, a pact, an agreement, a covenant.¹ And when we speak of a ‘new covenant’, we are implicitly appealing to an ‘old’ covenant—we mean that our present relationship with God is the conclusion and climax of a relationship which already existed in some form. Therefore, if we are to understand this basic institution of our religion we have to see it in its original setting.

For practical purposes we may begin with Abraham. Abraham was a semi-nomad wandering on the outskirts of civilisation in the second millennium before Christ. His position was not unique or strange: it is quite a normal way of life, one that is still lived by people in the same circumstances in the Middle East today; it is even a necessary way of life for people who depend for their livelihood on animals which have to keep on the move in search of pasture and water.

One of the most striking characteristics of such a way of life is the importance of the family. In the town, a man is surrounded by a whole network of relationships on which his life depends—shops, schools, police, government and so on. But away from the towns, in no dependence on its polity, the family comes into its own as the basic unit of society; and all the props and stays of communal living must be found within the narrow circle of the family.

Above all the family must ensure its own protection. For in the desert, there is no guarantee that the group of figures which approaches over the skyline will be friends rather than foes. Life in the desert is often hard, and one must always be alert against marauders who may carry off food and herds. Grazing grounds and water points, too, are precious and intruders are not welcomed.

A man, then, must rely on his family for help and protection: Abraham, going so promptly to the rescue of Lot, is doing no more

¹The Latin chose the word ‘testament’ rather than ‘covenant’ or some other word like that, in order to stress the one-sidedness of this agreement: a covenant with God is not an equal agreement between two equal partners, but one in which God freely binds himself – as in a ‘last will and testament’. The term also draws attention to the part played by our Lord’s death in this covenant, as when a man bequeaths his goods at death by his last testament. cf. Heb. 9. 16.

than family duty demanded. But for greater security, two families or groups of families could make an alliance; we have an example in the Bible in the case of Abraham and Abimelech—these two powerful sheikhs find their followers disputing over a well, so they come to an arrangement and seal their agreement with a covenant. When this happened, the resulting relationship was looked on as being the equivalent of blood-relationship: they were ‘blood-brothers’, and were bound by the same ties of allegiance and loyalty, the same obligations of protection and help.

This was the relationship that Abraham entered into with God. God was, as it were, the patriarch of his clan; to him Abraham owed allegiance and loyalty—‘faith’: God’s word was his law. And God on the other hand promised protection and help; just as a member of a powerful clan with many strong allies would be respected throughout the desert, so would Abraham be strong, for God was with him; he was responsible for God’s good name, and God’s reputation was at stake in his fortune.

God thus became his ‘redeemer’. The word used for this—*go’el*—originally referred to the rite of blood-vengeance, which is a typically tribal method of ensuring justice; where there are no police and no universally acknowledged system of law, it was the family which had to make itself jointly responsible for ensuring justice for its members. Thus, if one of them were killed, the rest would ensure that his death was avenged, and this threat would act as a sanction against bloodshed. In later, more peaceful days, the term came to be used in a wider sense of the next-of-kin who is responsible for the rights of the family; it is used, for example, of the kinsman who takes on the debts of another member of the family in order to prevent his property being alienated; and Boaz acts as a typical *go’el* to Ruth when he secures her possession of her husband’s land, and even marries her to make sure that the family name does not die out. It is in a similar sense that Job cries out: ‘I know that my redeemer liveth...’—he sees himself going down to the grave with unmerited ignominy, and he calls on God to act as ‘next-of-kin’ in assuring the triumph of his good name after death.

And so the Israelites, descendants of Abraham and like him bound in covenant with God, can call on God for protection and help, precisely in virtue of the covenant, precisely in virtue of his position as *go’el*: ‘Hear my words, O God, my rock, my redeemer’ (Ps. 18. 15): ‘When he brought death on them, they hastened back to him, and remembered God their rock, their redeemer’ (Ps. 77. 34). The relationship that God

has bound himself to is one of firm allegiance, rock-like in its firmness and reliability.

And most of all this relationship will come into play when they find themselves dispossessed and enslaved in Babylon. Just as he had brought them into being and made them his first-born sons by rescuing them from the slavery of Egypt, so now also he will act his part as *go'el*, redeemer: 'Fear not, Israel; I will come to your help, I the Holy One of Israel, thy redeemer . . .' (Is. 41.14).

Another effect of the covenant relationship—or rather, another way of expressing the same effect—was to call it 'salvation'. In English this word has negative connotations—we are saved from something or someone. This is true also in the Bible: it is 'salvation from our enemies and from all those who hate us' (Luke 1. 71), but it is not there restricted to the negative. It includes also the prosperity and power that God promised to Abraham, the blessings of wealth and fertility that are attached to the law.

This is even more true of another covenant-term: *peace*. This means absence of war, of course; but it is absence of war as a means to acquiring the blessings of life untroubled by conflict, a life in which each man will live at peace under his own vine and his own fig-tree. That is why it becomes the normal greeting: 'Peace be on you'—not merely in the sense that there should be cessation of hostilities, but in the sense that all that is good should come to him. 'The evil are at peace', says Job, and then goes on to describe what he understands by peace: 'Their cattle are fertile, their children are healthy, they sing and dance to the music of flute and harp . . .' (cf. Job 21. 9-13).

But it is not merely material comfort that this word 'peace' implies. It means 'the good life' in all its senses. The Hebrew word for 'peace' is *shalom*; and the root-meaning of this word is 'to be full'. To have peace, then, means to be living a full life. It is especially a 'civic' quality, because it is in the cities that this full life is most easily fostered. That is why Isaías foresees an ideal city in which the very name of the government will be 'Peace' (Is. 60. 13); and why the king of such a city, the child who shall be born to rule, shall be called 'Prince of peace', and equipped with the wisdom, strength, and prudence to ensure this quality (Is. 9. 5).

It is peculiarly a quality which community life exists to foster. In the city men live secure within strong walls, protected by government and law, with some internal organisation to ensure order and armies to ward off the attacks of enemies. And there in peace they go about their

daily tasks: agriculture flourishes, and trade and commerce; and wealth gives leisure for learning and spiritual pursuits, music and literature, beautiful buildings and sculpture. And most of all, a man's mind and character will expand by the mere fact of contact with his fellows, by the exchange of ideas, by the assimilation of thoughts.

Most of us are so used to urban civilisation that we do not realise how much we depend on the society in which we live: not only for the simple material things like food and clothing, but how our minds have been formed by the people we live with and by the books we have read—for better or for worse, by assimilation or by rejection. You cannot live with people and be unaffected by them. We cannot escape the pressure of society, and it has made us what we are.

Now, it was away from such an urban civilisation that God called Abraham. Many people profess to long for freedom from our crowded cities, from the clamour of communal living, from the pressure of people upon us. But in fact, they do not usually mean it quite literally. If you have books, you are still to some extent in contact with society, you are communing with another mind. If you have a radio, if you have music, you have not left society quite behind you. And if we did, how arid life would be. It would be a sort of solitary confinement, in which our spirits would wilt and wither.

God called Abraham away from this 'good life'; and Abraham's spirit did not shrivel away. On the contrary, his personality expanded and flourished, became more generous and noble. For in his covenant with God Abraham found *shalom*, peace, fullness of life. All that men provide for each other in the interchange of social living, all that and infinitely more Abraham drew from the rich source of all personality: his spirit nourished and fed from God, in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

So far we have been talking of the covenant in terms of a tribal league, an alliance between two sheikhs. But when circumstances change, and the term 'covenant' comes to have a slightly different meaning in human institutions, the divine reality is rich enough to adapt itself to the new pattern also.

God's covenant with Abraham was a relationship between two individuals. But from Abraham a whole people grew; and when God entered into covenant with them, it was visualized on the model of the covenant between a nation and its suzerain lord. Several examples have come down to us of such 'treaties of peace' imposed on a subject people by their overlord, and they are strikingly similar in form to the coven-

ant at Sinai. Such treaties usually begin with the titles of the overlord; and a reminder of the obligations which the subject people owe to him (as, at Sinai, ‘I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of bondage’). Then there is the claim to obedience (as ‘Thou shalt not have other gods before me’); and the other obligations imposed on the subjects. Blessings and curses were then appended to the treaty (like those which are found at the end of the legislation in Leviticus or Deuteronomy): and the treaty itself was placed in the shrine, in the safe-keeping of the god.

There are obvious differences between the Mosaic covenant and the one which God made with Abraham. The most striking difference is that the first covenant involved simply a promise, while the second imposed an obligation, a law. The Old Testament remains faithful to both traditions, without apparently noticing the conflict between them; but with the coming of the New Testament the underlying conflict was brought to the surface. It was St Paul who brought matters to a head, and he sided uncompromisingly with the Abraham covenant against the Mosaic form. It is not by the Mosaic law that we are saved, he says, but by faith after the pattern of Abraham’s. The covenant with Abraham is the earlier and more essential form of the relationship between God and man, and one which the law cannot disavow: ‘God made a covenant with Abraham first; can the law, made four hundred and thirty years later, annul this, and make void the promise?’ (Gal. 3. 17). Paul recognises the fact that the law is good, holy, just, spiritual (Rom. 7. 12-14); but nevertheless its results were evil, because of our weakness: ‘The law is spiritual, but I am weak, enslaved to sin’ (Rom. 7. 14); and its temporary role, as a guide and guard till Christ comes as the fulfilment of the promise to Abraham, must not be made into a permanent principle of salvation.

But actually the conflict between the two is not really so radical. In the first place, the same attitude on man’s part is demanded by both—faith, loyalty, sincere and whole-hearted allegiance to God. It was this, and not simple fulfilment of the law, which achieved salvation—this is what St Paul clings firmly to through all his anguished and tortuous dealing with the subject. This was the failure of the Pharisees—not that they respected the law, but that they tried to make it an independent and automatic key to salvation.

But the law, as a mere list of commands, cannot give salvation. The only way in which it could do that—the way that the Pharisees tried to choose—would be by making a strait-jacket for our unruly nature. But

our unruly nature will always find a way of breaking out of this strait-jacket, and then the law becomes, as St Paul saw so clearly, merely an added occasion of sin: 'The law enters in that sin may become truly sin, in order that sin may yet more abound' (Rom. 7. 13).

But the law was never intended to be merely an obligation. It was something much deeper than that—it was a revelation, and a revelation of the character of God himself. It told men what God was like, and offered this ideal to them as their own ideal: 'Be ye holy, as the Lord thy God is holy'.

Since it was a revelation, then, it was by faith that it had to be received. And it was in that faith, no less than Abraham's, that Moses and the people of God went into the desert and forward to their promised land. This faith united them with God; and the law—the actual series of commandments—was no more than a description or definition of the character of the God with whom they were joined in covenant. No human eye could see God; and they were not to have idols of him as had the pagan peoples. In place of such idols, they had the law: 'There is no other nation that has its god so close to it as our God is to us, in commandments and precepts . . .' (Deut. 4. 7-8). As such, then, the law was not a shackle on their liberty; on the contrary, it was the charter of freedom and a pass-word to a liberty they could not have dreamed of—the freedom of the sons of God.

In other words, the Mosaic covenant was like Abraham's covenant—a promise, and a promise of peace in the sense that we have discussed—the full development of personality, of the personality of God himself.

And in the new covenant, the new testament, this promise is fulfilled. We are called to live as strangers and wanderers in this world (Heb. 11. 13, 13. 14; I Peter 1. 1); and in place of the props and stays of human society, we rely on the covenant with our liege lord. But with that liege lord we are united in a real, mystical unity; his law is not externally imposed on us, but written in our hearts (Jer. 31. 31). As our kinsman, he will give us 'redemption'; as our lord, he will give us *salus*, well-being, salvation; and most of all, in that union we will find that fullness of living, that full development of personality by sharing in the personality of God himself, that we call *peace*.

Liturgy for Children¹

SISTER AGNES JULIE S.N.D.

Being at Spode brings to my mind recollections of Fr Austin Barker, who often came to lecture to us on social questions, and also gave us a very beautiful retreat. He was very dramatic and highly entertaining, and his name always brings to mind certain phrases, such as: 'Watch it, sisters; watch it very carefully!' I always remember hearing him speak about the children's mass on Sunday. He described it thus: 'Rows and rows of children—tall figure at the end—rows and rows of children all squashed together—tall figure at the end, booming out instructions, and directions and prayers—My dear sisters', he would say appalled, and holding his head in his hand, 'the divine sacrifice of the mass'.

Well, we all long to make this divine sacrifice real to the children—we would love to make them *want* to go to mass—we would all like to be able to say with Cardinal Newman, 'I could hear masses for ever and not be tired'. And yet, how hard it is to inspire this longing!

A few years ago, I prepared the prayers of the canon of the mass, meaning to go into a class and really do it properly! I typed the words out—spacing them in long lines, just as the gospel is printed in Archbishop Goodier's books—and went into class full of enthusiasm, gave out the papers and began. But no—it just didn't work. Even though I said the prayers with all my heart, and tried to explain them—I could see that the children attended—well, because they had to—but there was no real, live interest or attraction.

Suddenly I had an idea! I thought, I'll just take the preface—so I said to the class: 'Now we'll have a change, and you will all be angels. I am going to say the words, and that is *my* way of praying. As I say them you will do what you think the angels are doing in heaven—you have all seen pictures of angels. It may be praising God, adoring, thanking, asking or pleading, and that movement will be your way of praying: Just indeed it is, right and for our welfare, that we should always and everywhere give thanks to thee, Lord, holy Father almighty and eternal God, through Christ our Lord. It is through him that thy Majesty is praised by Angels, adored by Dominations, feared by Powers. Through

¹A talk given at Spode House in November 1960. The reader must imagine the visual and audial aids that went with it.

him that the Heavens and the celestial Virtues join with the blessed Seraphim in one glad hymn of praise. We pray thee, let our voices blend with theirs, as we humbly praise thee, singing: Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts! Heaven and earth are full of thy glory. Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!' The effect was simply marvellous! They offered up their prayers to heaven, they listened to the words, they made appropriate gestures—in fact the words began to live. Then I divided them into groups—Angels, Dominations, Powers, Cherubim, Seraphim. They grouped themselves anyway they liked, had a little talk about it, did it again, and I felt really thrilled with them. They for their part liked doing it, learnt the words very easily, they knew they were praying, their full attention was given to the words, and it was no time before they knew them.

I think children are natural mimers. I have never found anyone—any child who couldn't take part in a mime. I once had a great big awkward looking girl—but she made a wonderful tree in the garden of paradise. They know instinctively the difference between adoring—going right down to the ground—praising, right up to the sky—thanking, pleading, full of awe. They know how to express all these different ways of praying, and I do think that getting right down on to the ground, and bowing down to adore God, gives them that sense of reverence that nothing else can give. Certainly, they learnt it, they learnt what I wanted them to learn, and they learnt it happily, pleasantly and quickly.

From this beginning I thought of the mass as a drama in which I would like to impersonate everyone who was mentioned. Taking the mass from the offertory onwards, I found that we would need to represent the glorious and ever Virgin Mary, St John the Baptist, Sts Peter and Paul, the martyrs, all the saints, the choirs of angels, the twelve apostles, Linus, Cletus, Clement, etc., etc., thy just servant Abel, our father Abraham, thy high priest Melchisedech, the holy souls, John, Stephen, Matthias, right down to Lucy, Agnes, Cecilia, and Anastasia—44 not counting the choirs of angels, the saints and the holy souls—a goodly throng!

I then began to search for some way in which to convey the right idea of sacrifice, the positive idea—the idea of giving a present to God, and in a book, *The Meaning of the Mass*, by Fr Paul Bussard, I found this little parable which seemed to be just what we wanted. We did it in choral speaking, miming the obvious parts.

THE FIELD OF WHEAT

'Once upon a time in a far country there was a man who owned a piece of land which ran quite down to the seashore. The sea to which the land ran down was a peculiar sea, because there was never an ebb tide or a flow tide upon it. Always the water's edge remained quite in the same place. So in the spring of the year, the man ploughed up the land, and walking back and forth, scattered seeds of wheat upon the ground. One day it would rain and another day the sun would shine; and so, after many days, there was a great crop of wheat growing upon the man's land. At mid-day when the sun shone and the wheat was bowing beneath the wind, it looked to him like a sea of gold, waving under the sun. And at night when the moon shone, the man was hard put to tell which was his field of wheat and which was the sea water, so much they both looked like a sea of silver in the moonlight.

Now the man was wise. That is, he knew that God made the world and that God makes things grow in the world and makes them cease to grow. And the man was wiser than that. He knew that God had made him and that he, the creature, owed God a debt of gratitude and obedience; and he knew that he should satisfy in some way for his own disobedience. And then he wanted to thank God for the field of wheat which was golden in the sunlight and so silvery in the moonlight. He was already grateful in his own mind, but he was not satisfied with that. He wished to express that idea in a manner that all might see.

So, it happened that one day, the man took a scythe and cut down some of the stems of wheat. These he tied in a bundle. Then he took an axe and cut down a little tree, and after he had trimmed off the branches, he put the first sheaf of wheat on one end of the tree, and placed the other end firmly in the ground. Then the birds came and ate the wheat.

That was a sacrifice, the sacrifice of first fruits. It was a gift given to God in the best way the man could think of giving it. It expressed his gratitude and obedience and made some reparation for his past disobedience, and without doubt God was pleased with his child and in return gave him peace and the pledge of eternal peace.

This example of a sacrifice is apt, because the wheat was placed between heaven and earth. At another time there was a greater sacrifice, when the Son of God hung between heaven and earth, dying upon the cross, expressing in that manner the things the man expressed in his manner. And the example is more especially apt, because it is wheat. For the Son of God to this day continues that same sacrifice of the mass when he is present in the act of sacrifice under the form of wine and

bread which is made from wheat'.

This formed the opening of our sacred drama, as we began to call it. Having introduced the idea of sacrifice, we now represented the three sacrifices of the old covenant mentioned in the mass. Cain and Abel was the children's own vivid reproduction of the story. Time does not permit me to tell you of that, nor of the sacrifice of Abraham, which was taken directly from the Bible. As Melchisedech entered, the choir explained:

'Melchisedech was the king of Salem and priest of the most high God. He lived long before our blessed Lord and was the very first person to offer bread and wine as a sacrifice to God'.

St Paul says of Melchisedech:

'Observe that his name means king of justice and that he is king of Salem, that is of peace'.

That is all. There is no name of father or mother, no pedigree, no date of birth or of death. There he stands, eternally a priest, the true figure of the Son of God.

After we had once 'prayed', not 'performed', our sacred drama, I received a letter saying:

'I think the most outstanding participant—I must not say "performer", was Melchisedech, who really did convey the idea that he was the close prototype of our Lord as eternal high priest. This idea was conveyed by silent mime'.

In the meantime, we found classes to represent the apostles, popes and martyrs, not forgetting the holy souls, who were very popular. We had another class to represent the priests of the whole world. These were taught all the actions, from the offertory onwards, by a priest. They took great interest in watching the priest during the holy sacrifice, bringing their missals daily to school, and making one think that this was the first time they had really watched the actions of the holy sacrifice, so surprised were they to find that the priest did 'just what you said, sister'.

Having prepared the three sacrifices of the old covenant, we next mimed the last supper—taken partly from the epistle to the Corinthians and from the gospel of St John. In this connection we showed the film of the Jewish passover.

We then formed a great procession—a triumphal procession of the Church in heaven, on earth and in purgatory—carrying the crucifix on high and singing:

'Behold the royal ensigns fly
 Bearing the cross's mystery,
 Where Life itself did death endure,
 And by that death did life procure.

O faithful cross, O noblest tree,
 In all our woods, there's none like thee,
 No earthly groves, no shady flowers,
 Produce such leaves, such fruit, such flowers'.

Those representing the Church triumphant, took their places on the stage—Angels and Archangels, Dominations and Thrones in groups in front—apostles, martyrs and saints in serried ranks behind—our Lady being in the centre. Those representing the Church suffering took their places somewhat below stage on either side—whilst the Church militant stood below the stage and in front. The crucifix was placed between heaven and earth. Here was a visible representation of the communion of saints.

At the end of the hymn, all recalled the words of Abraham, saying:
 'God himself provided a victim for our sacrifice'.

Then, pointing each time to the crucifix all said:

*'This is the sacrifice we offer
 Here is the priest who offers
 Here is the victim who is offered
 Here is the altar on which the sacrifice is offered'.*

Then making a profound genuflection whilst the crucifix was raised on high, those in heaven, in purgatory and on earth proclaimed:

*'We adore thee, O Christ, and we praise thee,
 Because by thy holy cross thou hast redeemed the world'.*

Those on earth explained: We represent the priests of the whole world. We come from . . . each girl then called out the name of the country she had chosen, e.g., Mexico, France, New Zealand, England, Spain, etc. In this way we taught the prophecy of Malachias:

*'From the rising of the sun to the going down thereof,
 My name is great among the gentiles,
 And in every place there is offered to my name a clean
 oblation'.*

We now 'performed' the prayers of the mass, beginning at the offertory. As the narrator said the prayers, the girls in front performed every action of the priest whilst those in heaven made appropriate gestures of offering, supplication, adoration and thanksgiving, accord-

ing to the sense of the prayer. Thus, in the prayer for the mixing of the water and the wine

'O God, who in a wondrous manner didst create human nature', Adam and Eve appeared in heaven, showed the love, the temptation and the fall, disappeared from heaven. Then with

'and still more wondrously has restored it', when the crucifix was lifted on high, they returned restored to life. This little drama took place in heaven while the prayer was recited and the priests were taking the wine and water.

The souls in purgatory never wearied in pleading for a place of cool repose, of light and of peace, and at the appropriate moment when the priests below joined their hands for the *memento* of the dead, were willingly assisted into heaven by angels, and presented before the throne of God by our blessed Mother. Heaven was truly full of joy! As each individual saint was mentioned, the living representative rose to offer praise and supplications to God, and we recognized in heaven the apostles, whom we had seen at the last supper, whilst Abraham, Abel, and Melchisedech called to mind the ratification of the old covenant by the new.

This sacred drama was produced and performed in the lent term, and at the end of the year we had a dry mass in school. At the celebration of the holy sacrifice in the convent chapel the next day, the children's interest and devotion were very evident. The class who had taken the sacrifices of the old covenant wrote letters to me after they had seen the sacrifice of the mass. I give some quotations:

'Most of all I liked the mass because it taught me something I wasn't quite sure of—that is that the angels and saints join in to offer up the mass with the priests'.

'I have told my mother about the sacred drama. I learnt a good deal just watching the mass'.

'From where it began—which was the offertory—I have been thinking all about it, and have learnt a tremendous lot, and I like to hear those beautiful prayers which are mentioned in the mass.'

'I have learnt a lot by looking at that mime—it makes me want to go to mass more often in the week as well as on Sunday'.

'It has made me think that the priest does not offer mass on his own but we help him to do it as well'.

'Mass is being said all the time—even when I am writing this letter somewhere mass is being said'.

'I learnt that when mass is being said, it is said not only by the priest

and congregation, but the saints in heaven join in too'.

'When I go to church, I will think about the mass more seriously than I have ever done before'.

'I liked the sacred drama very much and it helped me very much when I went to mass this morning. This is what I have learnt from it—our sacrifice is as good as the one offered on Calvary, for indeed it is the same sacrifice only under different forms. I have realized that the church must be full of angels and saints, only we cannot see them, this in itself shows us that we must be respectful in church. The girls who played the part of the priests, taught me this—to watch the priest carefully and follow in my prayer book, because then you can understand what the priest is doing'.

One class, whose part was the holy sacrifice, composed thirty-five questions for a quiz—here are some of them:

'What is the difference between the offertory and the elevation?

How many times is our Lady mentioned in the mass and when?

What action does the priest do when he says, "Come, O sanctifier"?

What action does the priest do when the second bell rings before the consecration and what is the meaning of it?

Name the saints mentioned before the consecration.

What is the mystical body?

Why is the holy mass the best gift we can give to God?

This month (November) we are trying to do something about the liturgy of the mass for the dead. It is rather difficult to get across to children the right idea of death, and it is sad to think that so many grown-ups do not avail themselves of the comfort and sympathy of our mother the Church, when they lose their nearest and dearest. Death is, after all, life—the beginning of a new life, and as I read in *We die unto the Lord*, funerals are a profession of faith in the resurrection. We say daily 'I believe in the resurrection of the body and life everlasting'.

I gave a lesson to girls of fifteen or so when I wanted to prepare them for singing a requiem mass. 'If you cannot call to mind the name of one dead person you know', I said, 'raise your hand. If you only know one or two, raise your hand.' There was no response. Had they not been able to think of anyone, I was going to give them the newspaper, where they would find names of many people for whom they could pray. I told them to prepare a list of all the dead they knew, and then at the requiem we would hold these papers in our hands. I said I would prepare my own list, too, and of course, at the top of my list I would

write the names of my father and mother, who are both dead.

Profiting by the interest aroused by the mention of one's own parents, I said to them: 'Of course death is a great mystery—we cannot understand it—but as Catholics we firmly believe in the resurrection of the body. The day your mother dies is one of the saddest days of your life: your mother is your best friend, and once she has gone life is never quite the same. It is quite right to feel great sorrow at your mother's death, but if at that sad time you could just remember to turn to the Church, if you could remember that another life is beginning, that as the priest says in the requiem mass life is changed, not taken away—if you could remember to try to follow the prayers said by the priest, if you could try to understand their meaning now—then, at that sad time, you will benefit from the sympathy and consolation the Church is only too willing to give you. Listen to this beautiful hymn which is said at the graveside, a hymn of joy and hope'—and after explaining the story of Lazarus, I sang this

'May all the angels lead you into paradise, and at your coming, may the holy martyrs greet you: and may they lead you into the holy city of Jerusalem. May a choir of angels be there to receive you, and with Lazarus who once was poor, may you then enjoy eternal rest'. And these words of our Lord himself:

'I am the resurrection and the life, he that believes in me although he be dead shall live: and everyone who lives and believes in me, he shall not die for ever'.

The children picked this up very quickly and were quite pleased to sing it. We don't sing it at a liturgical function, as that would be against the rulings of the Sacred Congregation of Rites.

A young child who recently attended the funeral of her grandmother, to whom she was very devoted, came to tell me that she had recognized the prayers the priest had said at the graveside, and had been very comforted.

The mention of prayers brings me to the morning Assembly. Some of the prayers we use I have taken from Prime, thus associating the day with the great Religious Orders. Since the foundation of prayer is reverence it is worthwhile going to some trouble to inculcate this attitude in body and in mind. In a Religious House we have two bells to call us to prayer—one to get ready—to get the mind ready so that we do not go into God's presence unprepared. We take holy water at the door of the church, and even on entering have some way to go before we reach the holy of holies—all our steps are aids to preparation of our

minds for prayer. I explain this and ask for strict silence once the girls come into the Assembly Hall.

After having announced birthdays, wedding anniversaries, special intentions, illnesses, accidents, etc., I generally give a little reminder such as *one* of these sentences.

'Somewhere a priest is actually saying mass now: offer your prayers up with those of our Lord himself. What a wonderful opportunity it is to speak to God through our Lord Jesus Christ'.

'When God appeared to people in the old covenant, they fell flat on their faces—they were afraid'.

'God is here—where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them'.

'We are part of the Catholic Church and it is the Church's mission to praise and glorify the blessed Trinity'.

'Prayer is getting in touch with God'.

On special feasts the collect of the mass may be said, and in special seasons the whole Assembly may be different. This is always the case in holy week.

If we cannot walk in a procession on Palm Sunday, we can at any rate learn the liturgical hymn—the *Gloria Laus*, which makes a very good processional hymn:

'All glory, laud and honour,
To thee, redeemer king,
From whom the lips of children
Made sweet hosannas ring.
Thou art the king of Israel,
Thou David's royal Son,
Who in the Lord's Name cometh

The king and blessed one. All glory, laud and honour'.

We break up for Easter on the Wednesday in holy week, so we always have to do these things out of time. One day we have a solemn entry of the crucifix, covered in purple, carried by a very tall girl and preceded by four very small girls carrying lighted candles. The procession proceeds up the centre of the hall, whilst the children face that way, and at a signal make a profound genuflection as the crucifix passes, singing:

'Forth comes the standard of the king,
All hail thou mystery adored,
Hail cross, on which the Life himself
Died, and by death our life restored'.

But though I should like to go on and tell you much more about Easter ceremonies, I must draw this to an end. I hope at least you can see what can be done. And yet I feel I have been only scratching the surface, because whatever we do must be inadequate when we think of the liturgy, so vast, so wonderful, so mysterious. It means we must pray very hard about it all.

St Dositheus

SISTER FELICITY P.C.C.

'He was well to do and lived a careless and worldly life in a military circle'. Dositheus is not the only young man to be described in these terms in any century. It is safe to say he is not the only one to have been converted by the fear of eternal punishment either. Perhaps in the twentieth century when the notion of hell is considered a naive superstition, such a conversion may be more rare, but Dositheus was born around the middle of the sixth when (we are pleased to think) people were not so civilized and enlightened.

The young man heard from his friends and soldier acquaintances a great deal of talk about Jerusalem and made up his mind to visit the city and see for himself whether 'army language' was exaggerating its attractions. He toured the chief sights and was duly impressed, but it was a flamboyant painting depicting the tortures of the damned that made him stand still and stare in Gethsemane. Since Dositheus presumably knew nothing and cared less about eternal life he was very puzzled by this picture and stood gazing at it, attracted and repelled at the same time.

Suddenly it was imperative that he should find out what the lurid representation of human torment was all about. He turned to an elderly lady kneeling in prayer and interrupted her devotions to ask for an explanation. Nothing loth she gave him a great-aunt's lecture on the Four Last Things that left him almost speechless. The joys of heaven were, as to all over-sophisticated young men, incomprehensible to Dositheus. Everlasting happiness without wine, women and song?—Impossible. The pains of hell on the other hand needed very little

imagination. He had seen men die; and heard them. One was glad when it was over and the lifeless mass could no longer writhe and shriek. But what if it was never over? If indeed, as this sober and earnest woman told him, the body could die but somewhere else the death agony was for ever prolonged, something must be done about it.

Dositheus had no illusions about himself. He did not console himself by saying: 'Oh, well, I'm no saint but I'm not as bad as all that'. He knew nothing about saints anyway. So convinced was he of the reality of hell and his own deserts that he besought his instructress to tell him how to avoid such a terrible fate. She told him he must fast and pray and Dositheus became a doer of the word as well as a hearer in double quick time.

His amazed friends observed him frequenting churches, receiving instruction in the Christian faith, cutting out many of his usual attendances at the circus, the amphitheatre, the baths; turning a blind eye to the blandishments of ladies of easy virtue. 'O-ho', said the friends, 'You had better go and be a monk'. And Dositheus who had not thought of it before thanked them very much for the suggestion and said he would.

Abbot Seridon of Gaza was a little disconcerted at the first sight of this aspirant to the monastic life. Too well dressed he thought. Too delicately brought up he was afraid. Too young and too lacking in stamina he doubted not. The earnestness the young applicant brought to bear, however, reassured the abbot who accepted him and handed him over to the care of one of his monks, Dorotheus.

This holy man being a very experienced director soon took the postulant's measure. As Dositheus was not robust he was not introduced to a rigorous asceticism right away but allowed to do as much as he felt inclined in the matter at first. His master insisted rather on the necessity of silence and of overcoming impatience, moodiness and self-will in all its manifestations. Dorotheus taught that the perfect renunciation of the will in all things was more important than fasting, but his pupil was allowed to decrease his daily intake of food when he felt able. In time we are told Dositheus was managing to exist on eight ounces of bread instead of his customary six pounds a day. How anyone could consume six pounds of the hard ship's biscuit kind of bread baked by the Desert Fathers is hard to imagine. For all his delicate upbringing Dositheus must have had good teeth and a schoolboy appetite.

Eventually he was given the care of the sick and—heartening for those who have had a similar charge—he was sometimes impatient with their querulous demands and spoke sharply. Even so his patients loved

him because of his cheerfulness and kindness. He regretted his lapses into irritability so much that he would run to his cell and weep till his master arrived with words of counsel and comfort. It is to be hoped that the sick were not left shouting for the necessities of the sick-bed while he was thus occupied, for he was himself to know the penance of being dependent on others soon enough.

It was not long before Dositheus fell ill, apparently from phthisis. He was ravaged by constant haemorrhages from the lungs and the deadly weakness characteristic of the disease. The sole exterior practice of penance that remained to him was to deny his own will and in this he continued to the end. Dorotheus urged him, when he was capable of no further physical effort, to hold on to prayer, but there came a time when the sick monk felt he could pray no longer and admitted as much. Dorotheus reassured him. 'Give up the effort then, my son, but keep God in mind as ever present beside thee'. And then as Dositheus sank lower his master spoke again. 'Depart in peace; thou shalt appear in joy before the holy Trinity, and there pray for us'.

Several of the brethren took umbrage at Dorotheus. Imagine promising a priority passage to heaven to a man who had never fasted—not in the way they understood fasting at any rate—and performed no miracles. But Dorotheus, doubtless remembering that the Lord pronounced no strictures on those who do not fast, said mildly: 'It is true, my dear brothers, that he did not fast, but he completely surrendered his own will'. As if to endorse these words a very holy old man visited the monastery and while there asked God to show him the departed brethren who had gone straight to heaven. In a vision he saw a choir of aged monks and in their midst one young man . . . So accurately did he describe this young man afterwards that everyone recognized the holy lay brother Dositheus.

There is a striking parallel between the life of this sixth century young monk who was never officially canonised by the Eastern or the Western Church and the nineteenth century canonised young nun, Teresa of Lisieux. The same incapacity for harsh exterior austerities, the same disease, the same abandonment to the will of God. Even the attitude of the Lisieux community is similar to that of Gaza. 'What will our Mother find to say about her? She is a good little nun but she has never done anything worthy of notice'.

It is significant or at least remarkable that the saintly aunt whose influence on Teresa's early life was so marked (and who evidently lived by the *Little Way* long before her niece called it by its name and made

it famous) was known in religion as Sister Marie Dosithée. Surely this is a glimpse of the back of the tapestry; the mysterious strands that make up the communion of saints. Whether scorching in the arid deserts of the sixth century or wasting among the painted glass and pressed ferns of an outmoded gentility, all are seen as at a lightning flash to be one body in Christ.

Reviews

THE SERMONS OF THE CURÉ OF ARS, translated by Una Morrissy; Mercier Press, n.p.

THE OCCASIONAL SERMONS OF RONALD KNOX, edited by Philip Caraman S.J.; Burns Oates, 42s.

These two preachers lived almost exactly one hundred years apart: John Vianney died in 1859 and Ronald Knox in 1957, and during that century both the manners of men and the life of the Church, as well as the ideas of oratory, underwent great changes. Both preachers used scripts (John in his early days only, Ronald always) and John always learned his script by heart, while Ronald always read his and would never preach without one. Both prepared their scripts most conscientiously, John seeking for adequate rhetorical expression—for he knew exactly what he wanted to say—and Ronald researching in history and letters for adequate presentation. Both were preachers whom people flocked to hear; both were holy men. And both in these volumes have been exceedingly well served by their introducers, Lancelot Sheppard and Philip Caraman.

But the two preachers could hardly be more unlike: on the one hand Ronald's urbane scholarship, polished diction, knowledge of the Bible, studied historical allusions and quiet delivery, addressing English people gathered for an occasion; and on the other hand John's peasant manner of a country priest, with his rhetoric consciously borrowed from eighteenth-century orators, his almost exclusive concern with direct moral exhortation, interspersed with anecdotes (many borrowed) and gaily imagined conversations of sinners, all addressed Sunday by Sunday to a French country audience of over a hundred years ago. Yet both preachers in their own age and in their own milieu were to their hearers a powerful source of inspiration.

John Vianney knew little theology—of the kind one finds in books—and the sermons here all belong to his first years of trying to bring the difficult parishioners of Ars to a sense of elementary Christian virtue. He came to Ars

in 1818, and by about 1832 his work in the confessional obliged him to give up his meticulous preparation of sermons. These sermons therefore show the Saint during his early struggles, still uncertain of his technique, but certain of one thing: that he wanted his people to serve God wholeheartedly. Hence his constant warnings to his flock about lukewarmness, hypocrisy, sinful habits, unrepentance and occasions of sin (dancing, taverns, etc.). And we must remember his period. Lancelot Sheppard writes (p. xi-xii): 'Doctrinally Jansenism was dead—in *practice* some of its effects lived on. But it is too easy to term Jansenistic all that strikes us nowadays as too hard for man to bear . . . That the Curé d'Ars may have used a severity in dealing with his flock that now appears foreign to our present habits is really unimportant; he was of his times, he spoke to them in their own idiom, but we should not forget that as years went on his severity diminished . . . and the burden of his sermons—copied from no one: he had not the time—welled up from a heart overflowing with the love of God'.

Thus many of his warnings in their severe details may be 'period pieces'; but there are still the lukewarm among us and the hypocrites and the sinners, and there are still occasions of sin (even if not always in taverns), and there are few of us who can shrug our shoulders and say that the Curé's strictures cannot apply to us.

The book though published in Ireland is printed in America. The translation is lively and easy, and the titles are clever, though printed large in American style. Occasionally, however, the translation fails: 'What horror!' is hardly a translation (p. 4), and worse is: 'That is a bit strong now!' (p. 177), but mercifully these are rare.

Of particular value is an Appendix—called 'Afterward'—by Mgr Trochu on M. Vianney's personal library, which is preserved intact and which shows many of his sources and his reading.

Ronald Knox's sermons are charmingly introduced by Fr Philip Caraman, s.j., who had done the same for the 'Pastoral Sermons'. In this pleasantly produced volume there are ninety-one 'Occasions': twenty-one Saints and ten English Martyrs; fifty-four 'Occasions' such as a jubilee, a centenary, a dedication; a clothing or profession, an ordination, an enthronement and many others; and finally six panegyrics. The sermons range over more than thirty years, from 1920 (St Joan of Arc, no. 13) to 1956, within a few months of his death (St Edmund, no. 10), both of these being at St Edmund's; and one is immediately struck by the consistency of approach and style throughout the years. There is no 'early' or 'late' Knox, unless one notices a greater use in the later years of the Bible, and in particular of his own version.

The editor calls attention on p. 361 (a centenary) to the re-use of previous material (on p. 292): the central part of the sermon is identical. He did sometimes use a previous script (this time five years old) for a part of a sermon, and himself said that he often re-used or usually re-modelled retreat conferences, but that for any retreat he put in at least one entirely new one. Only, he said,

when he published them were scripts put away for good. But in this series, as Fr Caraman remarks (p. vi), there is a remarkable 'uniqueness' about each sermon: every sermon is 'unlike any other in construction and content', and the centenary 'doublet' is included as an interesting exception.

But Fr Caraman also calls attention to another quality (p. vi): 'Frequently his hearers must have been surprised by the precise knowledge he showed of the history of the parish or countryside, of topographical features of the district or of the lives of the priests who had served the church in which he was preaching. His knowledge is always accurate and always has a bearing on his argument . . . In all cases of centenary or jubilee sermons he worked local history into the larger canvas of the story of the Church in England; and in that story he showed the development of God's Providence'.

Lastly one feels an astonishment at the way this man was at the beck and call of so many: a Cardinal's funeral or a bishop's enthronement—or a simple priest's ordination or a nun's profession; it might be a gathering of the British Association—or a local S.V.P.; to honour Westminster Cathedral or a provincial parish church; to societies aiding converts or prisoners; to university audiences or schoolboys.

But after all the preacher is the servant of the people, be they country parishioners of Ars or distinguished audiences gathered for the 'special sermon', and both these preachers served their people well, without counting the cost to themselves.

SEBASTIAN BULLOUGH O.P.

THE GENERAL COUNCILS OF THE CHURCH, by F. Dvornik; Burns and Oates, 8s. 6d. A Faith and Fact Book.

THE CHURCH IN CRISIS, by Philip Hughes; Burns and Oates, 35s.

THE CHURCH IN COUNCIL, by E. I. Watkin; Darton, Longman and Todd, 18s. 6d. (paperback edition, 6s.).

The approaching General Council has naturally attracted a number of books designed to inform Catholics and anyone else who may be interested something about the previous Councils, what they did, and why they took place. The field is led by three well-known Catholic writers: doubtless there will be others to come.

Fr. Dvornik's book has, naturally, a special authority. Its author is one of the most learned of all Church historians, and in his particular field of Byzantine studies, perhaps the greatest living authority. Since the forthcoming Council is intended to be, amongst other things, an aid to the reconciliation of the eastern churches, we turn to what he has to say with expectations which are not disappointed. Fr Dvornik has written his book round the questions of the relations between East and West. He recounts the sad history of the growing divisions, the sorry tale of misunderstanding exaggerated by criminal stupidity, with remarkable lucidity, considering the complexities of the theme. The reader

of this book will have all the essential data to enable him to follow something of this side of the new Council's work. Fr Dvornik makes all sorts of important points in passing. He draws attention to parallels between the relation of a Roman emperor to a Council and his relation to the Senate, which do much to destroy the greatly exaggerated accounts of 'byzantine caesaro-papism' current in many history books—including that by Mr Watkin, of which more in a moment. He also elucidates the mess over the patriarch of Constantinople's designation as 'oecumenical', which he argues convincingly was never intended to detract from the Roman primacy, as many Latins thought.

What there is, then, in Fr Dvornik's book is admirable. But there is not space for much more than the problem of the East and a lot of things get left out. Both Mgr Hughes and Mr Watkin are more comprehensive, even more balanced.

Mgr Hughes has written a clear, stylish history, which will not, however, add much to his reputation. His book lacks, for me, historical imagination. What is more he is much better on the politics behind the Councils than on the theology which came out of them: he also carries discretion too far on occasions. This is very much a history book with 'authority' as its hero. Mgr Hughes knows how the Church is run now and he rather sees her whole history in a similar light. On the tome of Leo he writes: 'It is not, in tone or form, a work of theology at all, but a judgment, a decision, an authoritative statement that "this is the Catholic faith".' Yes, but it is a work of theology, rather a good one, in substance. It seems to me absurd to make this kind of distinction. Nor is Mgr Hughes very happy in the medieval period. He is confused on fealty, homage and investiture; I cannot think a layman will grasp the great issues of the Investiture Contest from what he is given here. Nor are the accounts of Councils of this period—the first and second Lateran Councils—either adequate or accurate. The most important measure the First Lateran fathers dealt with was the decree regularizing papal elections. Mgr Hughes is mistaken in thinking it 'restricted the election to the cardinals'. Nor does the decree say that 'a majority of their votes is essential and sufficient'—the notion of a majority decision is anathema to medievals in any case; in spite of Mgr Hughes the decree does require the emperor's approval and confirmation of a papal election. In his account of the Second Lateran Council, we are told nothing about the canon on reordinations: it is surely important to know that a General Council can err on an important matter of doctrine. Outside the medieval field the book gets better: I must admit that I personally find Mgr Hughes' views on the reformation and the early history of protestantism too hard to swallow.

This leaves us with Mr Watkin's book, which I think the best of the lot. Mr Watkin writes as an amateur in the best sense. Not himself a specialist in Church history, he relies on the work of others but is prodigiously well-read. What is more his affection for the Church informs the whole book. This gives him a splendid sense of relevance—it enables him to get more of what mattered into his book than Mgr Hughes does with more space at his disposal. There are points of disagreement, of course. Mr Watkin overdoes the usual line about

'Byzantine caesaro-papism', and he is inclined to think that the latest thing he has read on a subject is gospel truth. But for the most part the book is careful, accurate and scholarly. Apart from occasional signs of haste when sentences fail to work, the book is admirably written with many felicitous digressions and *personalia*. A conciliar condemnation of the use of the catapult is made the occasion of a few important remarks on the desirability of a condemnation of nuclear weapons: I do not agree with Mr Watkin's conclusions myself but his point on the futility of such condemnations has to be taken seriously. There are nice pen-portraits from time to time, judiciously acidulated accounts of Sylvester I and Urban VI balanced by a positively touching defence of Alexander VI. Altogether Mr Watkin is the man to go for: at six shillings the paperback version of his book is a bargain.

ERIC JOHN

MISSION ET UNITÉ, by M. J. Le Guillou; Editions du Cerf, 2 vols, 27 NF.

These two volumes offer between them something like six hundred pages of text and a hundred pages of notes. The text is a formidable array of information and reflection, while the notes, being largely bibliographical, make a useful guide to further research in the field of ecumenical relations. Much of the raw material, as the notes make plain, is of German provenance, but of course it is assimilated and reformulated in the lambent style of most French theological writing. It is the kind of thing, in fact, which French Dominicans do particularly well, and if Fr Le Guillou never quite achieves the penetration and vigour of such a distinguished *confrère* as Fr Congar, none the less his book is an honourable contribution to the same genre, and to the same cause. Fr Le Guillou works at the *Istina* study-centre, near Paris. It was originally founded, like the review of the same name, to serve the cause of Christian Russia, but its activities are now extended to work for Christian unity throughout the world. It is in the connection between reunion and mission that Fr Le Guillou finds the practical and theoretical centre of all current Christian activity. The first volume is a historical analysis of Protestantism and Orthodoxy, slanted to bring out the very different interpretations of Christian mission to the world which these two great traditions stand for. The second volume continues the analysis into the history of the Church's attitude towards them, and this finally leads to a theory of the Church, an ecclesiology, which is polarized by the concepts of mission and communion. Fr Le Guillou compares it with various non-Catholic ecclesiologies, and concludes that the idea of communion is the best bridgehead for discussion and negotiation in the ecumenical sphere.

Fr Le Guillou writes out of a deep sense of how vulnerable and precarious it is to be a Christian at all—of how isolated and marginal the faith already is, and how much more so it will be soon. The headlong eruption of the retarded nations is entirely reshaping the political and moral structures of the world. It is desperately urgent that Christians should try to pull together. There may be one or two

Christian countries left, but for the most part we are in the minority everywhere, sometimes hated and hunted, generally only disregarded, like harmless eccentrics. This does not mean that we must take to the hills, abandoning to a new barbarism the latest triumphs of Catholic civilization (Dali, no doubt, and Teilhard de Chardin). What it does mean, however, is that there is no longer the chrysalis of a Christian environment, the stability of settled Christian communities, to disguise from us the essentially and totally *missionary* nature of our existence. We shall soon be back where we were before Constantine. Fr Le Guillou does not take up all the implications of this situation, but he tackles the most important of them: that is how the gospel is to be heard if Christians do not speak with a single voice. It is true that the basic facts of the Christian message have to be restated now in terms of languages and cultures which are perhaps unprecedently hostile, but that makes the divisions of Christianity only all the more scandalous. The problem defines itself most painfully in the mission field—in South America, to take Fr Le Guillou's example. How are we to tolerate, in a continent which is at least nominally Catholic, the incursions of numerous Protestant missionaries? Leaving out of the count what may happen if these nations decide that they can overhaul civilization only by totalitarian methods of social and economic reconstruction, and the suppression of religion which that usually means, here we have one, largely decaying, form of Christianity under hostile pressure from another more vigorous form. There is, in fact, as the Protestant bodies draw together in the World Council of Churches, some danger that a rivalry may develop between this powerful Protestant alliance and the Catholic Church, so that, as we are pushed to the margins of social and moral influence in the world, we undermine whatever position we retain by inter-Christian feuds.

The deep-seated fears of Rome which so many other Christians still harbour are slowly breaking down. One hopes that the coming Council, by manifesting the Church's capacity for self-reform and self-renewal, will give fresh and decisive impetus to the ecumenical movement, so that we may face the next fifty critical years together, not divided and opposed. The way in which, during the terrible years after 1933, Protestants and Catholics in Germany drew together, so irrevocably that mutual co-operation and understanding there surpass that anywhere else, offers a good example, but it is not without significance that the World Council is holding its third assembly this autumn in New Delhi, because the non-European members are especially eager to overcome the divisions which originated in Europe, and which European missionaries have reproduced all over the world. Both for that assembly and for our own council, as well as for the uneasy role of the Orthodox Church between the two, no more effective and timely preparation is to be found than Fr Le Guillou's study, with its discreet learning, large perspectives, and unfailing fraternal compassion.

FERGUS KERR O.P.

WORLD CATHOLICISM TODAY, by Joseph Folliet, translated by Edmond Bonin; The Newman Press, \$3.25.

Language analysts as well as experts in pedagogy, political and religious orators, lovers and comedians know that the meaning of words often depends not only on their linguistic context but on the tone of voice, the enthusiasm of a conversation. This is the reason why a certain sort of foreign literature translates very badly indeed. The words and their contextual meaning are faithfully translated, but somehow the enthusiasm slips through the translator's fingers. How do you translate enthusiasm? Enthusiastic religious writing from well known French authors often proves bitterly disappointing when before us in English because the French spirit which was direct and exciting in French words comes across as a tormentor of good English prose; words are twisted in agony—out of place like corpulent businessmen digging up drains. This is what has happened to Dr Folliet's contribution to the *Editions du Cerf* series.

Enthusiasm and concern are not qualities that we can import, and it would be a mistake to try; for, as Aldermaston has shown, we have our own concern. One can think, for instance, of good English political writing that is persuasive, and I suppose untranslatable. Dr Folliet is probably right, however, in suggesting that it is hard to find this enthusiasm in English Catholic writing, and also in suggesting that there is a sort of apathy that is almost natural to a state that is successfully capitalist. After all, this is exactly what some people are saying in this country. I cannot, however, understand what he means when he suggests that our intellectual poverty is due to our lack of contact with the continent. One has only to reflect that the vast majority of our clerical students are, for instance, taught their philosophy from continental text books: that hundreds of them do their studies abroad. Indeed so thorough are we in our continental connections that students have little time to acquaint themselves with the philosophical and social concepts of their own country. If this is a problem it would be one of internal rather than continental communication.

I wish Dr Folliet had shown more interest in this problem of connections because it is another aspect of the problem of the sort of book he is trying to write; the connection between the specialised and the general. As a sociologist he must value the precision that a clearly defined social entity gives to his conclusions. But he has not worked out the connection between this specialised sociology and world catholicism. What he has done is simply to put the whole frog on the slide, and it is little wonder that his vision has become vague and has forced him to cast his writing in the most uninteresting generalities. This is the tone of polite conversation, and of course includes personalities—lists of Catholics who have made good in the world. The personality image of modern advertising is so disreputable that I cannot believe that the Catholic writers, and they are legion at the newspaper level, who are for ever indicating that some famous people are Catholics, have succumbed to the social morality of the soap powder magnates. Anyhow on Dr Folliet's marking it is only depressing: Brit-

ain collects the odd bronze medal—in the strangest events.

The sort of method Dr Folliet has chosen can only offer us general information. For example the chapter on the spirituality of contemporary catholicism does no more than mention various modern saints and trends. As I have indicated, this level of mentioning is so remote that when it is put to the test in the final chapter one feels that the denunciations are getting nowhere near the problem. You can't talk very meaningfully *in* such abstractions; you can talk *about* them but in that case you would be using one of them as a way into a problem. Religious sociologists must obviously resist the temptation to operate on this level, since there just isn't room for the jargon it manufactures.

Most of us are ill-informed about Catholics in other countries and this book for all its unwieldiness gives a fair amount of such information. Dr Folliet goes out of his way to be fair all round, sometimes enigmatically—I am still trying to work out what he meant by saying: 'Salazar is no Franco'.

CHARLES BOXER

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IN PARABLES, by Franz M. Moschner; B. Herder Book Company, 36s.

WITNESSES OF THE GOSPEL, by Henry Paneel; B. Herder Book Company, 28s.

The former is a book of meditations, based on, but not tied down to, our Lord's parables. The author explicitly prefers to make no distinction between the kingdom of heaven and the Church. It is the kingdom as present in particular Christians that is the first subject of his meditations, and he makes legitimate use of the theme 'The kingdom of God is within you' to relate the teaching of the parables to the spiritual life of the individual soul. In the twenty-six parables dealt with, the thought is clear but conventional. The translation (from the German) is adequate, apart from occasional lapses into religious jargon ('espousal' for 'marriage', etc.).

Rational meditations on scripture are one thing, but pious re-casting of gospel stories is quite another. The second book gives us journalistic accounts of familiar episodes, reported to us by one of the characters present on each occasion. For example, 'The Raising of Lazarus, by Martha his Sister' is the title of one episode. The effect is not so much to give us a deeper understanding of the gospel message itself, as to deflect our attention to the imaginatively obtrusive journalism of the book's author. With the advance of the biblical and liturgical revival, surely the time has come for us to refuse any longer to be diverted from the very source of Christ's message by sloppy and sterile substitutes.

ROBERT SHARP O.P.

THE MYSTERY OF MARY, by R. Bernard O.P.; B. Herder Book Company, 37s. 6d.

This is an American translation of a book that has already been reprinted several times in France. It is a comprehensive work of meditation on our Lady, designed for everyone, in which theology and edification are blended, with a preponderance on the side of theology. Throughout, the author stays close to his sources, with constant references to scripture, the magisterium of the Church and St Thomas Aquinas. It is to be regretted that full advantage is not taken of some of the best of the more recent Mariological development by theologians. The book appears to have suffered in translation, so that it has the fault of so many works about Mary, a tendency to glutinize what otherwise could and should be useful statements. Surely we ought to be spared, for example, the reference (on p. 64) to 'the charm inherent in the vocation of the purest of adolescent girls'; and there is a good deal in this *genre* (p. 123): 'she espoused the sorrowful destiny of her beloved Son with every fiber of her being'. Though I have been unable to obtain a copy in the French, it seems likely that this sort of thing may have been quite acceptably phrased in the original. These failings mar, but do not destroy, the genuine value of the book.

ROBERT SHARP O.P.

MARY SAVE US, translated by K. A. Trimokes S.J.; Paulist Press, 50 cents.

In our centrally heated and somewhat enervated religious societies in the West you will come across many little books of devotion. These are sold in large numbers, probably because they are excessively sentimental, but they are not unlike pop records in that while they give you a slight titillation of the flesh and make you feel warm and cosy inside, they make no challenge upon your mental or spiritual resources. They are often rather nauseous compilations which I am inclined to think do more harm than good.

Such publications are shown up for what they are by this small book of prayers composed by Lithuanian refugees in Soviet Russia. These prayers have all the qualities that the others lack. They are a direct response to a human situation. They are in no way pretentious. They have no really great claims as literature. They are written by simple people who were taken from their homes and put into prison camps in Soviet territory thousands of miles from their villages in Lithuania. They have no great literary garnishings, they are surprisingly lacking in metaphor or sudden flashes of style and they have not the great rumble of rhythm that we are so used to in our own well loved prayers which have come down to us through the centuries. Yet reading these, nobody can doubt that they are a genuine response and a genuine appeal to God from people who find themselves in truly terrible conditions and seek help directly from him. And because of this their very simplicity—their almost stark nature—is very moving.

O HEAVEN, BLESS THIS DAY OF TOIL

A day of hard toil is dawning.
 Blessed Trinity, I wish to glorify You
 by patience and respect
 for my fellow workers.
 Give us wisdom and strength
 to endure calmly all misunderstanding,
 contempt, and hatred.
 Bless those dear to me,
 my whole nation, and especially
 the defenders of my fatherland,
 orphans, and all those who suffer for the Truth.
 Unite us all by lively faith,
 unquenchable hope,
 and love that knows no bounds. Amen.

As much as one loves the great prayers which have been handed down to us by men of genius in the past, it is perhaps refreshing and good for us to read something which comes direct from the hearts of simple people. And when we read these we not only find our own ordinary daily fears and hopes realised in simple language, but we are able to see them afresh. There has been much criticism of the Church for listening again and again to the same old words. This is often an unfair criticism, but at the same time there is something in it and it does not hurt us to read the prayers of people whose words come from their hearts and from the depths of despair and degradation.

O LORD, BLESS MY SLEEP

The day has closed its eyes.
 Fatigue closes my eyes.
 My feelings have dried up,
 my strength has left me.
 O Lord, I thank You
 for all Your graces of today:
 for health, strength, and food,
 both that of soul and of body;
 for every good heart, for every pleasant thing;
 for hope, for my native tongue
 that I hear in this strange country.
 I thank You for the suffering,
 hatred, and all shortcomings
 whereby You tested me.
 Lord, I beg of You peaceful rest
 for myself and my dear ones. Amen.

I hope that many people will read these and read them again and be refreshed by them and perhaps come back to them, and also maybe be helped in formulating their own wishes and desires when in communion with almighty God.

JOHN GRIFFIN

RETURN TO BELIEF, by Yvonne Lubbock; Collins, 21s.

This is an account of an intellectual journey over half a lifetime from agnosticism to Christianity. There are by now a good many books on the subject, but this one presents some unusual features.

After a preliminary account of why she became dissatisfied with the materialist dogmatism of her contemporaries, Mrs. Lubbock considers the problem of immortality, which, after a brief survey of some of the independent evidence, she concludes is inseparable from that of the existence of God. The God of Plato is so much more attractive than the Unmoved Mover of Aristotle, that the adoption of the latter by mediaeval Christendom for the philosophical articulation of its faith is surprising. The pantheism of Spinoza she finds hollow and unsatisfying, and she is disappointed by the arguments of Descartes and Leibniz for the existence of God, whom they seemed to require merely to plug the leaks in their systems. From Kant is learnt the importance of the experiencing subject in religious belief, and this truth is reinforced by Kierkegaard; with the help of Hegel there are discovered important inner meanings in those doctrinal elaborations of Christianity which had previously seemed so unnecessary and irrelevant. There follows a series of very brief sketches of the great religions, of which Hinduism is said to embrace too many contradictory opinions to be intellectually satisfying, and Buddhism to be obsessed with the negation of life and desire. Judaism explicitly looks forward to a climax beyond itself, while Islam, much as it has to teach the West as far as religious observance is concerned, has no theological doctrine to offer that is not already in Judaism or Christianity. Next comes an account of Christianity dealing with its characteristic doctrines, the nature of faith, and the Church. There is a most useful appendix of quotations from the philosophical and religious writings to which reference has been made.

The remarkable erudition of this book, and the systematic manner in which it is laid out, may mislead the reader into believing that it is very closely argued. But the characteristic search is apparently rather for emotional than for intellectual satisfaction. Someone of a different emotional make-up, if he had made this pilgrimage at all, would have had to make it by a very different route. Irreligion is certainly capable of finding a more solid intellectual foundation than it seems to have done among those of the author's contemporaries at whom she pokes fun. But with these reservations, the book may be heartily recommended; it has the atmosphere of a philosophical cocktail party, at which the reader is introduced to a large number of interesting people, past

and present. Mrs. Lubbock plays the part of an accomplished hostess, adding a shrewd comment here and there, and stating why, and to what extent, the views of a particular guest carry conviction with her. No-one is allowed to monopolise the conversation; in many books of the kind Kierkegaard or Aquinas would certainly have appeared as a *deus ex machina*, to dispel all problems and remove all doubts. The deep but not uncritical respect shown towards Hegel might be taken to heart by philosophers.

HUGO MEYNELL

IMAGES AND SYMBOLS, by Mircea Eliade, translated by Philip Mairet; Harvill Press, 18s.

'Symbolic thinking is not the exclusive privilege of the child, of the poet or of the unbalanced mind: it is consubstantial with human existence, it comes before language and discursive reason'. Thus Professor Eliade, in his foreword to this book, indicates the importance of looking into the religious symbolisms of the past in order better to understand our own minds. 'Let no one object . . . that it is all right for poets, children and the people in the Tube to satiate themselves with nostalgias and images, but for goodness' sake let serious people go on thinking and "making history". Such a separation between the "serious things of life" and "dreams" does not correspond with reality. Modern man is free to despise mythologies and theologies, but that will not prevent his continuing to feed upon decayed myths and degraded images'.

The book in fact consists of four long chapters on different groups of religious symbols, written independently of each other (and necessarily making for a somewhat scrappy whole), with a foreword about the psychological and literary importance of symbols, and a concluding chapter on the relationship of symbolism with history, and in particular its place in Christianity and the Christian view of the function of history.

The four chapters deal respectively with the symbolism of 'the Centre', of time and eternity, of the God who binds and of knots, and with the various water symbolisms (shells, pearls, the moon, etc., as well as water itself). Interestingly enough, the chapter which seems to present no kind of coherent pattern—that on the various binding and knotting symbolisms—is the only one which finds no echo in the Christian symbolisms which Professor Eliade discusses in his final chapter. And, while the Centre and Water symbolisms both hold the same sort of place in Christianity as they hold elsewhere, the whole question of time is very different: in other religions (the Hindu is his particular concern here), time is something to escape from; the only real events are those which take place outside time; the only function time can fulfil is the renewing and repetition of creation expressed in the notion of cyclic time—which is simply a way of increasing our chances to escape out of it altogether. But in Christianity, because of our belief that God became man, time is given a totally new significance, 'time is *pleroma* by the very fact of the incarnation of the

divine Word: but this fact itself transfigures history. How could it be empty and meaningless—that time which saw Jesus come to birth, suffer, die and rise again? How could it be reversible or repeatable *ad infinitum*?

It is not possible for a non-specialist to assess the importance of Professor Eliade's thesis. But one cannot fail to be enormously impressed by the scope of his thought, and his determination to treat religion as religion, and not as a branch of sociology or anything else. As in *Patterns in Comparative Religion*, his longer work, the analysis of time is perhaps the most valuable thing in the book. With the emphasis that is coming more and more to be placed today on the *Heilsgeschichte*, it seems to me that what he has to say is relevant to a lot of our more strictly theological thought.

The translation is excellent.

ROSEMARY SHEED

JOYFUL MOTHER OF CHILDREN, by a Loreto Sister; Gill, 30s.

It is just one hundred years since the death of Mother Francis Teresa Ball, the subject of this biography. Today more than one hundred Loreto convents in all parts of the world bear witness to this remarkable woman's work for Catholic education.

Born into the wealthy Dublin society of the early nineteenth century, she 'forsook the world ere it forsook her' and was sent to England by her director, the celebrated Dr Murray, Archbishop of Dublin, to make her noviceship at the Bar Convent, York. Here she was to imbibe the spirit of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary with a view to returning and establishing it in Ireland. (The Bar Convent, owing to the Napoleonic Wars, was cut off from its Generalate on the continent and thus, as an isolated community, hardly in a position to make the foundation, as they had been requested to do).

Mother Teresa Ball was eminently qualified for the undertaking and her religious life of forty years is an amazing record of achievement—having started from one tiny foundation, at her death Loreto convents numbered thirty-seven, and were established in the four quarters of the globe.

The author of this biography has given a very complete account of Mother Teresa's work and of all the difficulties overcome, labours undertaken and trials endured, in this far from easily won 'success story'. There are detailed accounts, also taken from contemporary letters, chronicles, or necrologies, of the lives of Mother Teresa's pioneer companions. The result is a valuable and inspiring factual history of the establishment of the Irish Branch of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary. But it must be admitted that disappointment awaits the reader eager to encounter the real person, this character so paradoxically composed of gentle sweetness and authoritative determination, of unassuming charm and far-sighted enterprise. The personality of Mother Teresa does not emerge and we meet not a character in the round, but a portrait which might fit many another woman of her spiritual calibre—a type but not an individual.

However, as the dedication discloses, the book is intended primarily for past pupils of Loreto for whom Mother Teresa Ball will already be a living personality and it is to these readers that it will give the greatest pleasure. The many illustrations, especially the photographs of houses of the Institute in many countries, and the fine portrait on the dust jacket add to the appeal of a well-presented volume.

URSULA MURPHY

Notices

THE CHILDREN, by Rosemary Haughton (D.L.T., 8s. 6d.) gives lively, straightforward and extremely sensible advice to parents on teaching their children the faith. Follow it and help to cut the lapse-rate.

THE CITY, edited by Donal Flanagan (Gill, 7s.) is a set of twelve short essays on various aspects of the Church, reprinted from the *Furrow*, all by priests, mostly Irish.

NOTRE PAIN QUOTIDIEN, by Honoré Sarda M.D.F. (Les éditions ouvrières, NF 4.50) gives scripture readings, mainly from the gospels, arranged under twenty-seven weeks, a theme to each week, with simple commentary and jolly pictures—all very French.

The rest are translations. **CHRIST'S RESURRECTION**, by P. Bourgy O.P. (Challoner, 7s. 6d.) is popular theology of the best kind, a valuable short account of the new insight that has been gained into the central mystery of our faith, and in good English.

THE LIFE OF FAITH, by Romano Guardini (Burns and Oates, 10s. 6d.) is theology of a different kind, in the solid German manner, leaning on philosophy. It deals with the Christian experience of faith.

FERNAND PORTAL, by H. Hemmer (Macmillan, 25s.) is an abridgement of a French book published in 1947, the life and theological ideas of the 'apostle of unity', friend of Lord Halifax, who worked so long for corporate reunion with the Church of England. A useful book for those willing to learn from the mistakes of the past.

CHRYSTOS' COMMENTARY ON ST JOHN (Homilies 48-88, completing the work) is a recent volume in the patristic translations from Fathers of the Church, Inc. (n.p.). Chrysostom is not easy to recognise in his nineteenth century dress, for this is translation of the 'nay rather' kind, useful mainly for filling library shelves.

PROBLEMS IN PSYCHOANALYSIS (Burns and Oates, 30s.) is an ably translated and useful symposium by European Freudian analysts, the last third of which concerns frontier problems with religion.

L.E.